

Counseling

General Information Meetings

Students planning to apply for admission or students wishing to enroll in any of the Counseling Department's courses are urged to attend one of the monthly informational meetings specifically planned for prospective students. Selection criteria, admission procedures, registration and advisement procedures will be explained.

Master of Arts Degree

The 60-unit graduate program in counseling offers two professional training options: Option I prepares students for Community Counseling and the Marriage, Family and Child Therapy (MFT) licensure in California, and Option II prepares students for the School Counseling: Pupil Services Credential (PPSC). Individuals who already have a Masters in Counseling may apply for the PPSC only.

The program relies heavily on interpersonal skill training and field experience, beginning during the first semester and culminating with an intensive supervised internship in some aspect of counseling, permitting the integration of theory, research, and practical application during the second year. The department assists students in obtaining field placement relevant to their projected professional goals. These placements include, but are not limited to: marriage and family counseling agencies, mental health clinics, counseling centers and public schools, community colleges, and college-level student services departments.

Special characteristics of the program include the following:

1. Early observations of and involvement in actual counseling settings;
2. Development of a core of knowledge and experience in both individual and group counseling theory and practice;
3. Encouragement in the maintenance and development of individual counseling styles;
4. Commitment to self-exploration and personal growth through participation in peer counseling, individual counseling, and group experiences. This aspect of the program is seen as crucial to the development of adequate counseling skills and is given special consideration by the faculty as part of its evaluation of student readiness to undertake internship responsibilities.

In sum, the training emphasis in the program is to integrate theory, practical experience, and personal learning rather than exposing students to a piecemeal professional preparation. The goal is to establish in the student a sound foundation for a lifetime of continued professional growth — a foundation that permits confident movement into an entry-level counseling position but which does not pretend to be more. Within the scope of a 60-unit program the faculty sees such a goal as eminently worthwhile.

The faculty is committed to the idea that counselors of the future should take an active role in helping to shape the social/political/environmental milieu in which they will work. While the faculty recognizes how difficult this task may be in specific instances and areas, it sees the counselor as one who actively participates in the life of an organization, not as submissive keeper of the status quo, but as a sensitive and perceptive voice representing individual freedom and human values.

The Master's program may be completed within two academic years; however, some students with job and/or family responsibilities may wish to move more slowly. Resources permitting, efforts will be made to accommodate individual patterns. For most students, 8 units per semester will be considered a minimal number. Most courses are offered weekdays during the academic year with a limited number of evening and summer classes. It should be stressed that course selection should be planned very carefully, since many courses will not be offered every semester.

The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), a specialized accrediting body recognized by the Council on Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation (CORPA), has conferred accreditation to the Counseling Department at Sonoma State University in Community Counseling and School Counseling.

A student who has not been formally admitted to the Counseling Department may take no more than 12 units and only in the following course offerings of the department depending on availability, with permission from the instructor: COUN 501, 502, 503, 511, 513, 520AB, 522, 525, 535, 545, 570, and 581. Admission to individual courses in no way implies admission to the Master's Degree program or the PPSC program.



Admission Requirements

- A. A Bachelor's degree — preferably one in the behavioral sciences with background in psychology. Prerequisites, necessary for admission into the program, include: a course in personality theory for both options; a course in abnormal psychology for the Community Counseling/MFT option, and a course in learning theory for the School Counseling/PPSC option. Effective Fall 2001, all incoming students will need as a prerequisite to admission an undergraduate or graduate level statistics course that includes Analysis of Variance. Approved courses at SSU include Counseling 505, Math 165, and Business 211. Those students who have not taken such a course after admission will be conditionally classified for up to one year. Furthermore, Counseling 513 must be taken within five years following the completion of this prerequisite. Community Counseling students are expected to have a background in Freud, Jung, traditional behaviorism, and client centered therapy.*
- B. A 3.0(B) grade point average in the last two years of undergraduate work. Applicants who satisfy all other requirements may petition the university for waiver of this requirement. It should be emphasized that such waiver is not automatically granted.
- C. Completion of Department of Counseling application forms in addition to those required by the University.
- D. A personal interview, and for the school counseling a group interview.
- E. Departmental admissions committees have found the following criteria meaningful for applicants, or even indispensable for applicants:
1. The ability to handle academic work of graduate-level rigor; generally as evidenced by previous academic performance.
 2. Relevant work experience (paid or volunteer).
 3. Behavioral science background (on a BA level).
 4. Global personality assessment suitability for a career in a helping profession.

Master's Degree Requirements

60 units required. Included are core courses plus one of the options listed below; course descriptions are available on the department's Web site: www.sonoma.edu/counseling.

Core Courses	Units
COUN 501 Theory and Practice of the Professional Counselor	4
COUN 510A Counseling Pre-practicum	4
COUN 510B Counseling Practicum	4
COUN 512 Theory & Practice of Group Counseling	4
COUN 513 Research & Evaluation in Counseling	4
COUN 514A Supervised Internship.....	4
COUN 514B Supervised Internship.....	4
COUN 525 Psychological & Educational Assessment	2
COUN 535 Developmental & Clinical Issues with Children & Adolescents.....	4
COUN 570 Cross-Cultural Awareness in Counseling	3

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Option I: Community Counseling: Marriage & Family Therapy ..Units	
COUN 502 Adult Development: Individual, Family, Career.....	3
COUN 503 Dynamics of Individual Behavior	3
COUN 540 Marriage & Family Counseling.....	4
COUN 545 Law & Ethics for the Counselor.....	3
COUN 580 Relationship & Sex Counseling.....	4
COUN 581 Introduction to Chemical Dependency.....	1
COUN 582 Psychopharmacology	2
Electives (with department approval).....	3
	23

Option II: School Counseling: Pupil Personnel Services Credential	
COUN 511 Career Development.....	4
COUN 520A Role of the Elementary School Counselor	3
COUN 520B Role of the Secondary School Counselor.....	3
COUN 521 Pupil Personnel Services-Concepts & Organization	4
COUN 522 Counseling Students with Special Needs.....	3
COUN 523 Working with Families in a School Setting.....	4
Elective (with department approval).....	2
	23

Total units for the MA60

All masters' candidates are required to complete a project representing a comprehensive and integrative understanding of the field of counseling. Projects are to include a case analysis and a proposal for developing a mental health or school guidance and counseling specialized program.

600 clock hours of supervised field experience are required for either MFT or PPSC credential options.

Application Procedures

There are two applications: one to the CSU and one to the department. Persons can obtain the standard statewide application form from the Admissions Office of the Sonoma State University or a community college. Students are accepted into the counseling program only once a year, in the fall. We begin taking departmental applications starting in October and continue to January 31 for admission the following fall. All applicants to the program must also apply for admission to the university, following the university timelines for admission procedures. For specific instructions and procedures contact the Counseling Department and Admissions and Records. Applications can be downloaded from the department's Web site, www.sonoma.edu/counseling, after October 1st.

* *School counseling students are expected to have experience working with children. An educational background is also desirable.*

We hope this information will be helpful. Official requirements of all majors and programs are published in the Sonoma State University catalog. Sonoma State University is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Institution and has a strong commitment to the principal of diversity. A member of the California State University

